

Chief Secretary for Administration Visits HKO

Sandy SONG

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs Carrie LAM, visited the Hong Kong Observatory, including various offices and facilities, on 8 April to gain a better understanding of the department's operation and new developments. Mrs LAM noted the popularity of the Observatory's website, mobile applications and educational programmes and recognised the department's efforts in promoting public interest and knowledge on meteorology and climate conditions. She commended the Observatory staff for delivering services in a dedicated and professional manner. In recognition of the Observatory's long-standing core values in providing people-oriented services through science, innovation and partnership, Mrs LAM said, "The weather and climate records kept by the Observatory for more than 130 years reflect the progressive development of Hong Kong as a metropolitan city, and the stories of professionalism from its staff testify to the continuing development of the Observatory as a leading meteorological service in the region."

Mrs Carrie LAM (centre), the Chief Secretary for Administration, visited the Central Forecasting Office accompanied by Mr SHUN Chi-ming (left), the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory.



New Services by HKO

Editorial Board

At a press briefing held on World Meteorological Day, 23 March 2015, the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr SHUN Chi-ming unveiled a number of new services (see below and Page 2). He also provided the projections of the annual rainfall and the expected number of tropical cyclones for this year, and emphasized the impact of climate change on Hong Kong. In particular, he reminded the public to remain vigilant against the threat of inclement weather, enhance their awareness of disaster prevention as well as gear up for climate change.

Highlights of the press briefing



Tropical Cyclone Forecast Track Extended to Five Days

LEE Kwok-lun



Track of Wayne from mid-August to early September of 1986 (The numbers show its position at 08:00 HK Time on each day.)

The new forecast track diagram uses different representation to illustrate the uncertainty of the extended forecasts for the fourth and fifth days.

The accuracy of the Observatory's tropical cyclone track forecast has improved in recent years with average accuracy of a fifth-day forecast based on objective verification at around 400 kilometres, comparable to a third-day forecast a decade ago. As such, the Observatory will extend the

tropical cyclone forecast track from three days to five during this tropical cyclone season, so that members of the public can take precautionary measures well in advance. The uncertainty of forecast generally increases with forecast range, and in particular, the track of tropical cyclones can be rather changeable under the influence of multiple meteorological factors. For example, in 1986, Tropical Cyclone Wayne changed its course three times while approaching Hong Kong. To highlight the increased uncertainty of the fourth- and fifth-day forecasts, the new track diagram will use a different colour shading for the extended forecast range.



Milestone

Revamped Climatological Information Services Webpage

On 23 March, the Observatory rolled out a new version of the Climatological Information Services Webpage for enhanced provision and usage of climate information. The new webpage provides one-stop online access to over 130 years of Hong Kong climate data, including the latest climate news and educational resources on climate-related topics. Through new features and an improved user interface, members of the public and users from various sectors will enjoy more convenient access to a wide range of climate information and statistics.

LI Kin-wai

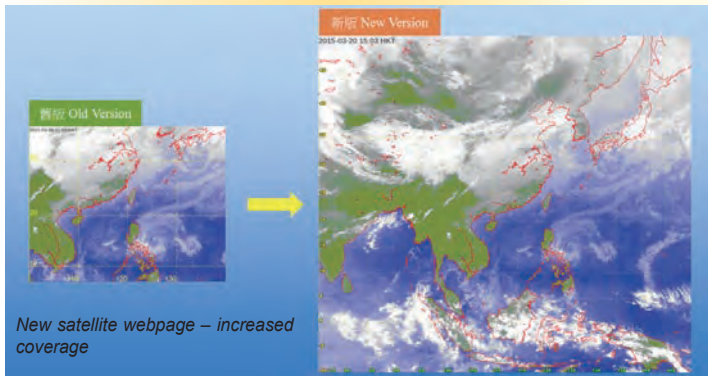


Revamped Climatological Information Services Webpage



Revamped Satellite Webpage

KONG Wai



New satellite webpage – increased coverage

On 23 March, the Observatory launched an updated version of its satellite webpage, offering improved regional and global coverage of satellite imagery to give users a better idea of weather conditions around the world.

Observatory Front Page Gets a New Look

Armstrong CHENG



The new front page of the Observatory website will soon go online. Information relevant to the underlying weather scenario will be shown on the front page to give members of the public a comprehensive picture. For instance, during tropical cyclone situation, the forecast track diagram will be displayed on the front page.

International Cooperation

Observatory Produces Video on Typhoon-Related Hazards

Sandy SONG

The Observatory has produced a set of short videos on typhoon-related hazards (including strong wind, rainstorm, huge wave and storm surge) for the Typhoon Committee in the Asia/Pacific region with a view to increase public awareness on typhoon-related hazards and disaster prevention. The video was premiered at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015 (left), as well as uploaded to the Observatory and Typhoon Committee websites.



Short Video on Typhoon-Related Hazards

Observatory and Meteo-France Sign MOU to Mark Closer Ties

Editorial Board

On 24 March, the Observatory and Meteo-France signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to step up experience sharing on the latest areas of development, such as the exchange of aviation-related weather information as well as real-time uplinking of aviation-specific meteorological information for pilots. The MOU also promotes technological exchange in various aspects, including severe convection forecast, the use of very high resolution numerical weather prediction model and also the detection and alerting of low-level windshear using LIDAR technology.



Mr. SHUN Chi-ming (right), the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, shaking hands with Mr. Fabien Masson (left), the head of Aviation Weather of Meteo-France, after signing of the MOU.

Hong Kong in a Warming World

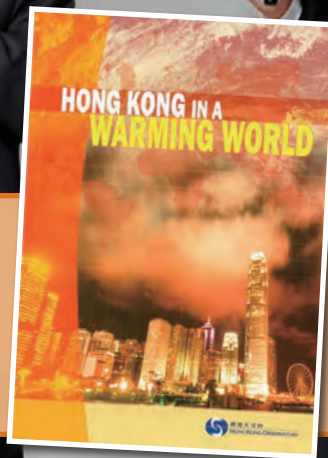
Climate Knowledge for Climate Action

According to the latest climate projections, **the number of hot nights and very hot days will increase substantially** under the high concentration scenario of greenhouse gas. By the end of the century, there may be more than 100 very hot days a year!

That's going to **make things worse**. The more aircon you use, the more electricity is consumed, and this will increase greenhouse gas emission. In the end, extreme weather will become more likely.

Well, just turn on the air conditioner.

The Observatory has published a booklet **Hong Kong in a Warming World** to enhance public awareness on climate change and its impact on Hong Kong. Members of the public can access the online version on the Observatory's website, or pick up a free copy from the Hong Kong Observatory Resource Centre while stock lasts.



"Climate Knowledge for Climate Action"

Public Talk Linus YEUNG

On the morning of 28 March, the Observatory organised a public talk on climate change. The event, which echoed the theme of this year's World Meteorological Day, "Climate Knowledge for Climate Action", had keynote speakers from CLP Power Hong Kong Limited and the Institution of Engineering and Technology (Hong Kong Branch). Around 500 participants, mostly young people from various youth groups, Friends of the Observatory, the Hong Kong Design Institute, the Community Weather Observing Scheme and more, attended the talk. Participants thoroughly enjoyed the speakers' insightful presentations on climate knowledge and found their energy saving tips extremely useful. According to one participant's online post, "learning climate knowledge and taking action for low carbon living is actually very cool!"



Observatory's "Sky Dragon" - First-ever Dragon Boat Team

HKO Staff Association



Team Spirit

Colleagues of the Observatory came together to form the first ever HKO dragon boat team "Sky Dragon" and took part in a race held in Shatin in April. Mr SHUN Chi-ming, the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, led the hidden talents of "Sky Dragon" as their drummer as the team set a new milestone for the Observatory.

Under the guidance of a coach and the lead of experienced team members, colleagues trained hard over the past few months. Working closely together, they encouraged one another as they strived to achieve good results in the race. Members of "Sky Dragon" made remarkable progress after just a few training sessions. Very much impressed by the team's eagerness to learn, Coach SIU said members were not at all intimidated by the intensive training. Gradually they worked to propel the boat in unison – impressive indeed for a team training for their first race.



"Sky Dragon" taking part in their first race with the Director as drummer



"Sky Dragon" paddling furiously towards the finishing line

On the day of the race, it was both tense and warm. As one of the 19 competing teams, "Sky Dragon" were high spirited and team members gave their utmost best in striving to win the race. At the same time, they felt exceptionally encouraged by the unwavering support from fellow team members as well as friends and family. The Director thanked the team and the cheerful squad for their effort, "This race aptly illustrates the importance of team work over individual performance, and the basic principle of management is essentially the same." We surely hope that "Sky Dragon" can keep up their good work and achieve even better results in the future!

Sky Dragon: Are you Ready? Attention! Go!

Group photograph of "Sky Dragon" members, a cheerful squad with their coach on the day of the race.

Cool Met Stuff Promotion Daniel YEUNG

Video Competition

In an effort to nurture the creative talents of young people and promote meteorological knowledge, the Observatory jointly organised the "Cool Met Stuff Promotion Video Competition" with the Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI). The

competition was well received with around 100 students submitting creative and imaginative entries, and an award presentation ceremony was held in the Grand Hall of Tsim Sha Tsui District Kai Fong Welfare Association on 28 March.

The HKDI students revealed that this was the first time they produced videos for an external organisation. Miss Rummy NGAN Chun-ying, who won the Best Animation Award and the Best Art Direction Award, said she had watched every episode of Cool Met Stuff while working on her entry and learned a great deal about weather phenomena.

Miss Rummy NGAN Chun-ying, winner of Best Animation Award and Best Art Direction Award.



Award winners of Cool Met Stuff Promotion Video Competition from HKDI



Winning Entries:



Cause of Lunar Eclipse



Total lunar eclipse captured by the Observatory's live webcast crew at Cape D'Aguilar – the dark red colour of the moon is caused by sunlight refracted by the Earth's atmosphere onto the umbra illuminating the moon.



Cause of Lunar Eclipse

Blood Moon Eclipse

MOK Hing-yim



The Observatory team sets up webcast equipment at Cape D'Aguilar

On the evening of 4 April, the Observatory, the Hong Kong Space Museum, Ho Koon Nature Education cum Astronomical Centre, Po Leung Kuk Ngan Po Ling College and the HKSKH Solar Tower Camp jointly produced a webcast on the total lunar eclipse. Despite the cloudy periods, the webcast crew was able to capture the important stages of the lunar eclipse for online viewers.

Fun with the Public

Hong Kong Observatory Open Day

LEE Fung-ying

The Hong Kong Observatory Open Day 2015 was held on 28 and 29 March with a record-breaking attendance of close to 20,000 visitors. The services of the Observatory were introduced through a wide array of exhibits. CLP Power Hong Kong Limited joined the Open Day for the first time with a game booth featuring the “Step Power Generator” to promote energy conservation and environmental protection. Visitors enjoyed live weather reports by TV weather presenters from the Observatory and had great fun with Dr Tin, the Observatory’s mascot. Meanwhile, Mr SHUN Chi-ming, the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, hosted autograph sessions. Members of the public were deeply impressed by the variety of activities on offer.



Children enjoy a live weather report by the Weather Man (Scientific Officer Linus YEUNG) up close and personal.

Apart from HKO staff, over 80 volunteers of Friends of the Observatory receive visitors during the Open Day as HKO ambassadors.



Observing the Sky and Clouds - Weather Photo Competition

TAM Kwong-hung



Mr SO Chung-ping, Chairman of Tsim Sha Tsui District Kai Fong Welfare Association (first from left), with winners of the competition.

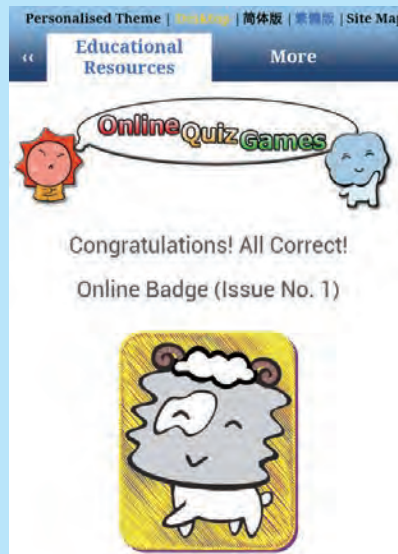
The “Monthly Weather Photo Competition 2014” organised by the Community Weather Observing Scheme (CWOS) was successfully completed, and an award presentation ceremony was held in the Grand Hall of Tsim Sha Tsui District Kai Fong Welfare Association on 28 March. Some of the winning CWOS members invited their family and friends to the ceremony as well as the “Climate Knowledge for Climate Action” Public Talk organised by the Observatory.



Winning entries of the “Most Popular Monthly Weather Photo Competition 2014”

Educational Resources

On 18 March, the Observatory launched online quiz games featuring different themes to promote weather-related knowledge. Members of the public can take a new quiz roughly once a fortnight and receive a souvenir for successfully completing a certain number of quiz games. A grand prize will be presented to participants who have answered all questions correctly in the 21 quiz games.



Quiz Games

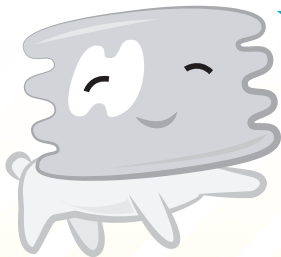
KONG Yu-chau

Question 2: Which of the following is an indicator of global climate change over the past 50 years?



- A) Increase in average surface temperature
- B) Rising sea level
- C) Shrinking of glaciers and arctic sea-ice
- D) All of the above

Ask Dr Tin



Fog, mist and cloud are all formed by tiny suspended water drops in the air, but how do we tell their differences?

Phenomenon	Visibility
Fog	< 1 km
Mist	1-5 km



Fog and mist are formed when water vapour in the air condenses as it comes into contact with the relatively cold ground or sea surface. They are largely distinguished by their impact on visibility: fog is said to have occurred when visibility is reduced to under one kilometre, whereas mist is reported when visibility is between one to five kilometres.

There are many types of clouds. Most of them are formed high up in the sky. Stratus, a type of cloud with low base, can form from undispersed fog uplifted due to warming of the earth surface.



HKO Sidelights



Mr Ivan CHU (fourth from left), Chief Executive Officer of Cathay Pacific Airways and Captain Mark Hoey (fourth from right), General Manager Operations, are pictured with Mr SHUN Chi-ming (third from left), the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Ms Sharon LAU (third from right), the Assistant Director (Aviation Weather Services), and Observatory staff during their visit on 31 March.

On 20-22 January, the meteorological authorities of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao met in Macao for their annual cooperation meeting cum technical conference. This photograph shows Mr SHUN Chi-ming (front row, second from left), the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Dr FONG Soi-kun (front row, third from left), the Director of the Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau, Mr LIU Jinluan (front row, third from right), the Deputy Director General of the Guangdong Meteorological Bureau, and Mr ZHANG Jiwen (front row, first from left), representative of the Department of International Cooperation of the China Meteorological Administration, with other participants of the meeting.



On 18 April, Mr SHUN Chi-ming, the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, served as the keynote speaker at the talk "Hong Kong Typhoons and Implications for the Future" held in the Hong Kong Maritime Museum. The interesting event featuring invaluable photos and images attracted a large number of audience from Hong Kong and abroad.

Staff and "Friends of the Observatory" who received words of thanks and commendation from the public or organisations from January to March 2015:

Observatory Staff
Commended by
the Public

Ms Sandy SONG (Senior Scientific Officer)

Mr Linus YEUNG, Dr Daniel YEUNG (Scientific Officer)

Ms Joanne CHAN (Experimental Officer)

**Mr FUNG Kwok-chu, Ms LEUNG Man-ye
(Senior Scientific Assistant)**

Mr CHEN Yung, Mr YEUNG Sau-wai (Scientific Assistant)

Miss YAM Kwan-mei ("Friends of the Observatory" Docent)



Staff of the Observatory visited Solar Tower in Ma Wan Park on 16 January. Serving the functions of astronomical science education and ecotourism, Solar Tower houses a number of exhibition galleries set out to give visitors a better understanding of astronomy.

Happy Business

On 12 February, staff of the Observatory visited the headquarters of the Senior Citizen Home Safety Association.



Staff Promotion



Mr LAM Kin-yui (right) was promoted to Senior Scientific Assistant on 11 February.

Volunteers of
the Observatory
Visited Senior
Citizens



Volunteers of the Observatory visited Kwun Tong Day Care Centre for the Elderly during Chinese New Year.



For details of the activities, please visit:
<http://www.hko.gov.hk/wisnew.htm>
<http://www.hko.gov.hk/hknews/indexe.htm>